

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A suede artificial leather comprising a three-dimensional entangled body comprising a superfine fiber having a fineness of 0.2 dtex or less and an elastomeric polymer A, the suede artificial leather satisfying the following requirements (1) to (4):

(1) ~~the three-dimensional entangled body contains~~ a pigment A in an amount of 0 to 8% by mass is embedded in the superfine fiber, wherein the pigment A is at least one pigment [[A]] selected from the group consisting of an organic pigment having an average particle size of 0.01 to 0.3 μm and carbon black having an average particle size of 0.01 to 0.3 μm ~~in an amount of 0 to 8% by mass;~~

(2) ~~the elastomeric polymer A contains~~ a pigment B in an amount of 1 to 20% by mass is embedded in the elastomeric polymer A, the pigment B being at least one pigment selected from the group consisting of an organic pigment having an average particle size of 0.05 to 0.6 μm and carbon black having an average particle size of 0.05 to 0.6 μm , or the pigment B being a pigment particle having an average particle size of 0.05 to 0.6 μm containing an organic pigment;

(3) the ratio of the elastomeric polymer A to the three-dimensional entangled body is 15:85 to 60:40 by mass; and

(4) an average raised nap length of the superfine fiber present on the surface of the suede artificial leather is 10 to 200 μm .

Claim 2 (Original): The suede artificial leather according to Claim 1, wherein the pigment A is at least one pigment selected from the group consisting of condensed polycyclic organic pigments, insoluble azo pigments and carbon black.

Claim 3 (Original): The suede artificial leather according to Claim 1, wherein the three-dimensional entangled body contains the pigment A in an amount of 0.1 to 8% by mass.

Claim 4 (Original): The suede artificial leather according to Claim 1, wherein the pigment B contains at least one pigment selected from the group consisting of condensed polycyclic organic pigments and insoluble azo pigments.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The suede artificial leather according to Claim 1, wherein the elastomeric polymer A is a polyurethane having a diisocyanate component comprising an aliphatic diisocyanate or alicyclic diisocyanate ~~as its diisocyanate component~~ and having a hot water swelling rate of 20% or less when measured immediately after immersion to a hot water of 130°C.

Claim 6 (Original): The suede artificial leather according Claim 1, wherein the elastomeric polymer A has a color fastness to light of third rating or higher when measured by an evaluation method of color fastness to xenon arc lamp light under conditions of a black panel temperature of 83°C and an accumulated irradiated illuminance of 20 MJ.

Claim 7 (Original): The suede artificial leather according to Claim 1, wherein the elastomeric polymer A is derived from a water-dispersed elastomeric polymer having an average particle size of 0.1 to 0.7 μm .

Claim 8 (Original): The suede artificial leather according to Claim 1, wherein a surface of the suede artificial leather has a color fastness to light of fourth rating or higher

when measured by an evaluation method of color fastness to xenon arc lamp light under conditions of a black panel temperature of 83°C and an accumulated irradiated illuminance of 20 MJ.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): The suede artificial leather according to Claim 1, wherein a layer comprising an elastomeric polymer B containing 0.5 to 25% by mass of a pigment C is continuously or discontinuously disposed on a surface of the suede artificial leather around ~~feets~~ feet of nap-raised fibers.

Claim 10 (Original): The suede artificial leather according to Claim 1, wherein a knitted fabric or a woven fabric is laminated in an inside or on a back surface of the three-dimensional entangled body.

Claim 11 (Original): A semi-grained artificial leather comprising a nap-raised superfine fiber with a mingling grained portion comprising an elastomeric polymer C, which is produced by partially covering at least one surface of the suede artificial leather as defined in Claim 1 with an elastomeric polymer C.

Claim 12 (Original): A grained artificial leather produced by covering at least one surface of the suede artificial leather as defined in Claim 1 with an elastomeric polymer C.

Claim 13 (Withdrawn): A method for producing a suede artificial leather comprising a three-dimensional entangled body comprising a superfine fiber having a fineness of 0.2 dtex or less and an elastomeric polymer, which comprises:

a step (I) for producing a fiber-entangled nonwoven fabric comprising a superfine fiber-forming fiber which comprises a thermoplastic component slightly soluble in water for forming the superfine fiber and a water-soluble thermoplastic polyvinyl alcohol copolymer component, the thermoplastic component slightly soluble in water containing at least one pigment A selected from the group consisting of an organic pigment having an average particle size of 0.01 to 0.3 μm and carbon black having an average particle size of 0.01 to 0.3 μm in an amount of 0 to 8% by mass;

a step (II) for impregnating the fiber-entangled nonwoven fabric with an aqueous dispersion containing a water-dispersed elastomeric polymer and a water-dispersed pigment B in an amount of 1 to 20% by mass of the water-dispersed elastomeric polymer such that a ratio of the elastomeric polymer derived from the water-dispersed elastomeric polymer to the three-dimensional entangled body is 15:85 to 60:40, the water-dispersed pigment B being at least one water-dispersed pigment selected from the group consisting of an water-dispersed organic pigment having an average particle size of 0.05 to 0.6 μm and water-dispersed carbon black having an average particle size of 0.05 to 0.6 μm , or a water-dispersed pigment particle having an average particle size of 0.05 to 0.6 μm containing an organic pigment; and

a step (III) for removing the water-soluble thermoplastic polyvinyl alcohol copolymer component by extraction with an aqueous solution, thereby fibrillating the superfine fiber-forming fiber into the superfine fiber having a fineness of 0.2 dtex or less.

Claim 14 (Withdrawn): The method according to Claim 13, wherein the water-soluble thermoplastic polyvinyl alcohol copolymer is a modified polyvinyl alcohol having at least one unit selected from the group consisting of olefin units having four or less carbon atom and vinyl ether units in an amount of 1 to 20 mol%.

Claim 15 (Withdrawn): The method according to Claim 13, further comprising a step for dyeing.

Claim 16 (New): The suede artificial leather according to Claim 1, wherein the pigment A is present in an amount of 0.1 to 8% by mass.

Claim 17 (New): The suede artificial leather according to Claim 1, wherein the pigment A is present in an amount of 0.1 to 2% by mass.

Claim 18 (New): The suede artificial leather according to Claim 1, wherein the pigment A is present in an amount of 1 to 5% by mass.

Claim 19 (New): The suede artificial leather according to Claim 1, wherein the pigment A is present in an amount of 0.2 to 5% by mass.

Claim 20 (New): The suede artificial leather according to Claim 1, wherein the pigment A is present in an amount of 0.5 to 4% by mass.

DISCUSSION OF THE AMENDMENT

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the recited amount range for requirement (1) is for pigment A, and to recite that pigment A is embedded in the superfine fiber, as supported in the specification at page 9, line 24 through page 10, line 3, and to recite that pigment B is embedded in the elastomeric polymer A, as supported in the specification at page 24, lines 17-24. Claim 5 has been amended to provide antecedent basis. Claim 9 has been amended by correcting the plurality of "foot."

New Claims 16-20 have been added, as supported in the specification at page 12, lines 1-6

No new matter is believed to have been added by the above amendment. Claims 1-12 and 16-20 are now active in the application; Claims 13-15 stand withdrawn from consideration, but are subject to rejoinder.